

NPL Site Narrative for Tri-County Public Airport

TRI-COUNTY PUBLIC AIRPORT Delavan, Kansas

Federal Register Notice: [July 27, 2000](#)

The Tri-County Public Airport (TCPA) facility comprises approximately 3.5 square miles and is located in Delavan, Morris County, Kansas. The site is being proposed to the NPL based on evidence of ground water contamination by chlorinated solvents, specifically trichlorethylene (TCE) and 1,2-dichloroethene (DCE). TCE has been detected in privately owned domestic wells within 3 miles of the site at levels above health-based benchmarks (that is, at levels which the scientific community has determined may pose health risks).

The TCPA was originally constructed as the Herington Army Airfield (HAAF) in 1942 and was officially declared surplus in 1946. The airfield property and buildings were quit-claimed by deed to the City of Herington in 1948. Most of the 300 buildings and structures associated with HAAF have been razed or removed. From 1948 to the present, the site has been used by a number of companies for various purposes. Operations have included aircraft restoration, plane storage, and manufacturing of farm implements, black powder, and roofing materials. From 1950 to the early 1960s, Beech Aircraft (Beech) leased all four hangars and several other buildings at the site. In 1980, the Raytheon Aircraft Company (RAC) acquired Beech. Operations conducted by Beech at the site consisted of a chromium conversion coat process, vapor degreasing, painting, paint

stripping, wing-tank manufacturing, aircraft refurbishing, aluminum processing, aircraft starter generator manufacturing, and steel wing-tank shipping container manufacturing. A wastewater treatment system was used by Beech for treating chromium process solutions and rinse waters. TCE was used by Beech in vapor degreasers at Hangars 1 and 4. Paint-stripping wastewater was transferred to a holding pond located to the north of Hangar 1, in or near an area that is now considered a potential burial area.

Several investigations have been conducted at the site, including investigations by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and EPA. The results of the investigations indicate that ground water has been contaminated with TCE and DCE within 3 miles to the north and northwest of TCPA, including the entire town of Latimer, Kansas. TCE has been detected in ground water samples collected from private wells within this distance at concentrations ranging from 3 micrograms per liter (ug/L) to 280 ug/L. TCE concentrations in 21 of the 23 private wells sampled exceeded the 5 ug/L maximum contaminant level (MCL) established by EPA as the highest permissible level of TCE allowed in drinking water. The highest concentration of TCE in a sample from a drinking water well (56 ug/L) was collected from the nearest private property directly north of TCPA.

Four separate ground water aquifers lie beneath the site. These aquifers are used for private drinking water and agricultural purposes. No municipal systems draw ground water from within 4 miles of the airfield; however, 92 private wells have been identified within this area. All the aquifers known to be used in the vicinity of TCPA have been shown to be contaminated with TCE. EPA and KDHE have provided bottled water or whole house filtration systems to 15 affected homes.

[The description of the site (release) is based on information available at the time the site was evaluated with the HRS. The description may change as additional information is gathered on the sources and extent of contamination. See [56 FR 5600](#), February 11, 1991, or subsequent FR notices.]

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaq.html> or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.